

In re Patent Application of:
LUE CHEE LIP ET AL.
Serial No. **09/988,907**
Filing Date: **NOVEMBER 20, 2001**

REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the present application. Independent Claims 1, 12, 21 and 32 have been amended to more clearly define the present invention over the cited prior art references. The claim amendments and arguments supporting patentability of the claims are presented in detail below.

I. The Claims Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected independent Claims 1, 12, 21 and 32 over the Dietz et al. patent. The present invention, as recited in amended independent Claim 1, for example, is directed to a method for processing a visitor request over an intranet for a visitor visiting an organization. The method comprises using the intranet within the organization for filling-out a visitor request form, and submitting the filled-out visitor request form over the intranet only within the organization.

A visitor database on the visitor is created based upon the filled-out visitor request form. A visitor approval request message is transmitted via e-mail to at least one evaluator within the organization if approval is required. The visitor approval request message has a hyperlink to the filled-out visitor request form. An approval recommendation is submitted by the at least one evaluator via e-mail for updating the visitor database.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to emphasize that the filled-out visitor request form is submitted over the intranet only within the organization. That is, the filled-

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out visitor request form is not sent external the organization.

An advantage of the present invention is that the e-mail messages are easily transmitted and received over the intranet between employees within the same organization or company for processing the filled-out visitor request form. In addition, the hyperlinks embedded within the e-mail messages allow the evaluators - also within the same organization or company - to access the filled-out visitor request form to provide a user friendly and efficient method of distributing and validating the filled-out visitor request form only within the same organization or company.

Amended independent method Claim 12 is similar to amended independent method Claim 1 but further recites that the visitor database includes classification of the visitor as a regular visitor or a foreign visitor, and that a visitor badge is issued based upon a validated filled-out visitor request form.

Amended independent device Claim 21 is directed to an intranet for processing a visitor request form and is similar to amended independent method Claim 1. Independent device Claim 21 has been further amended to recite that "at least one computing device comprises a plurality of software modules" to avoid any potential 35 U.S.C. §101 issues.

Amended independent device Claim 32 is directed to a computer-readable medium and is similar to amended independent method Claim 1.

Referring now to the Dietz et al. patent, a distributed computer network configuration to aid an organization in managing engagements of non-employee workers

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who are supplied by a vendor is disclosed. The organization maintains a computer system that is linked to a vendor's computer system. The vendor's computer system is separate from the organization's computer system, as best illustrated in FIG. 2 in the Dietz et al. patent.

As clearly illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 3 in Dietz et al., the vendor **230** is external the organization's LAN **205**. Consequently, information is shared between the organization's computer system **218** and the vendor's computer system **230** via the WAN **225**. Even though a database management system is provided within the organization's LAN **205** for accessing a database to create, modify, store and access non-employee workers, work assignments, time reports, and possibly electronic versions of employment agreements - the initial request for a non-employee worker is provided external the organization to the vendor via the WAN **225**.

In particular, Dietz et al. discloses that the distributed computer network has various nodes for communicating and sharing information between the organization and one or more vendors. Reference is directed to column 5, lines 23-25 of Dietz et al. and to FIG. 2, which provides:

"The organization's LAN **205** may be linked via a wide area network (WAN) **225**, such as the Internet, to a computer system **230** maintained by the vendor." (Emphasis added.)

Reference is also directed to column 2, lines 31-43 of Dietz et al., which provides:

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"According to another aspect of the present invention, an engaging manager is responsible for requesting a non-employee worker who is suitable to fill a particular position. To find a suitable non-employee worker, the engaging manager may send an e-mail request to the vendor. Upon receipt of the e-mail request, the vendor may compile a list of all qualified and available non-employee workers. The engaging manager may then request a non-employee worker from the list and, via e-mail, seek the approval of a supervisor for engaging the non-employee worker."
(Emphasis added.)

In other words, Dietz et al. discloses that a request for a visitor or non-employee worker is made by the organization over the Internet (i.e., external the organization's LAN) to the vendor supplying the visitor or non-employee. This is in sharp contrast to the claimed invention, where the visitor request form is filled-out and submitted over the intranet only within the organization.


Accordingly, it is submitted that amended independent Claim 1 is patentable over Dietz et al. Amended independent Claims 12, 21 and 32 are similar to amended independent Claim 1. Therefore, it is submitted that these claims are also patentable over Dietz et al. In view of the patentability of the amended independent Claims 1, 12, 21 and 32, it is submitted that their dependent claims, which recite yet further distinguishing features of the invention, are also patentable. These dependent claims require no further discussion herein.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments to the claims and the arguments provided herein, it is submitted that all the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



MICHAEL W. TAYLOR
Reg. No. 43,182
Allen, Dyer, Doppelt, Milbrath
& Gilchrist, P.A.
255 S. Orange Avenue, Suite 1401
Post Office Box 3791
Orlando, Florida 32802
407-841-2330

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